Connect SoCal 2024 & PEIR

March 7, 2024

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Presentation Agenda

1 **Public Comments**

2 **Plan Revisions**

3 **Topics for Further Discussion**

4 **Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR)**

5 **Next Steps for the Plan and PEIR**

SCAG
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

What is Connect SoCal?

- Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS)

- Connect SoCal is a **20+ year plan** with **$750 billion** in transportation investments, a regional development pattern and many supportive programs and strategies

A "continuing, cooperative and comprehensive" approach

2021	2022	2023	2024
FOUNDATIONS AND FRAMEWORKS	DATA COLLECTION AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT	OUTREACH AND ANALYSIS	DRAFT PLAN AND ADOPTION

Plan development included many steps including:

- 90+ Working Group and Technical Advisory Committee meetings
- 3,600+ public outreach survey responses
- 100+ Staff Reports to SCAG's Policy Committees and Regional Council
- Input solicited from County Transportation Commissions for Plan **Project List**
- Input solicited from local jurisdictions for **Forecasted Regional Development Pattern**

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Who did we hear from?

- **53 organizations/agencies**
  - State and federal governments (4)
  - Local governments (15)
  - Regional and subregional agencies (5)
  - County Transportation Commissions (4)
  - Organizations (25) *(incl. community, environmental, private sector)*
- **28 individuals**
- **= ~1,800 unique comments**

What did they say?

Organization/agency comments:

- Requests for clarifications, edits to text, or additional data and analysis

- Requests for project changes

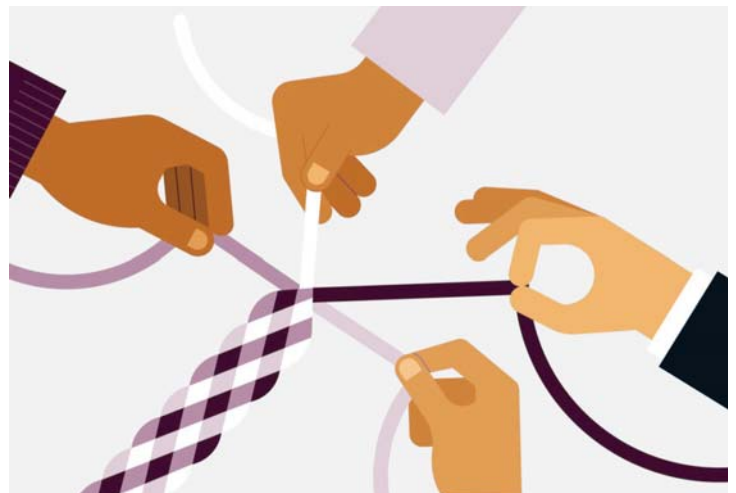- Suggestions for additional content or subject discussion

Individual(s) comment themes:

- SCAG consistency with CARB 2022 Scoping Plan 25% VMT reduction goal by 2030

- Questions about roadway investments versus active transportation and/or transit investments

How will we respond?

- All comments and associated responses will be included in the final proposed Connect SoCal 2024 **Public Participation and Consultation Technical Report**

- SCAG staff have made necessary model updates and input adjustments and are currently applying text changes to the main document and all technical reports

PLAN REVISIONS

Notable Changes to Connect SoCal 2024

1. Mobility Goal

2. Transportation Projects

3. Forecasted Regional Development Pattern

4. Sustainable Communities Strategy Consistency Language

5. Regional Planning Policies

6. Implementation Strategies

7. Modeling Enhancement and Improvements

1. Mobility Goal

Draft:

• "Build and maintain a robust transportation network"

Proposed final:

• **"Build and maintain an <u>integrated multimodal</u> transportation network."**

2. Transportation Projects

Three new projects

- *San Bernardino County:* Complete streets project
- *Los Angeles County:* New intercity bus route between Antelope and Victor Valleys
- *Los Angeles County:* Transit enhancement feasibility study

3. Forecasted Regional Development Pattern

- County of Los Angeles (unincorporated area): updates for two regionally-significant development projects

- Update results in slightly higher population, household and employment growth (~1-2%) for the county and the SCAG region

4. SCS Consistency Language

- New language will be added in three sections of Connect SoCal 2024 to clarify SCAG's interpretation of consistency and SCS alignment

- See Appendix 2: Growth Data and Sustainable Communities Strategy Consistency Language

  - *Revision "See Chapter 3 for additional examples" instead of "Chapter 3: Communities"*

  - *Addition "Such considerations may constitute an appropriate basis for a local jurisdiction to determine that a plan or project is consistent with Connect SoCal."*

5. Regional Planning Policies

- **Complete Streets and Safety:** clarify vulnerable road users

- **Transit and Multimodal Integration:** modify "extreme weather conditions" to "climate change"

- **Sustainable Development:** one policy removed

- **Natural and Agricultural Lands Preservation:** add language regarding the economic role of agriculture

- **Climate Resilience:** clarify support "for transportation, land use and other factors"

- **Tourism:** clarify role of local agencies

6. Implementation Strategies

- **Transit and Multimodal Integration:** modify "build" to "support" residential development

- **Priority Development Areas:** modify "develop" to "support the development of" housing

- **Natural and Agricultural Lands Preservation:** clarify RAMP is voluntary; include protection of wetlands

- **Climate Resilience:** add retrofitting of existing structures

6. Implementation Strategies (continued)

- **Broadband:** remove the reference to EV charging

- **Universal Basic Mobility:** modify "<u>pandemic response</u>" instead of "COVID" as a shock to travel

- **Workforce Development:** modify "family-supporting" to "<u>living-wage</u>" jobs

7. Modeling Enhancements and Improvements

Model Enhancements

- Reflects changes of future transit from Los Angeles Metro's NextGen bus plan and Metrolink's SCORE program

Scenario Planning Model

- Updated data to improve conservation estimates

Model Input Changes and Updates

- Auto Operating Cost
- Bike Lane Density
- Highway network
- Ontario Airport Passenger Forecast

Main Document and Technical Report Revisions

- Text additions or revisions for clarity

- Copy editing and stylistic edits

- Updated original sources or included references where feasible

- Updated maps, tables and figures

- Removal of two quantified GHG emission reduction strategies

- 95 project modifications

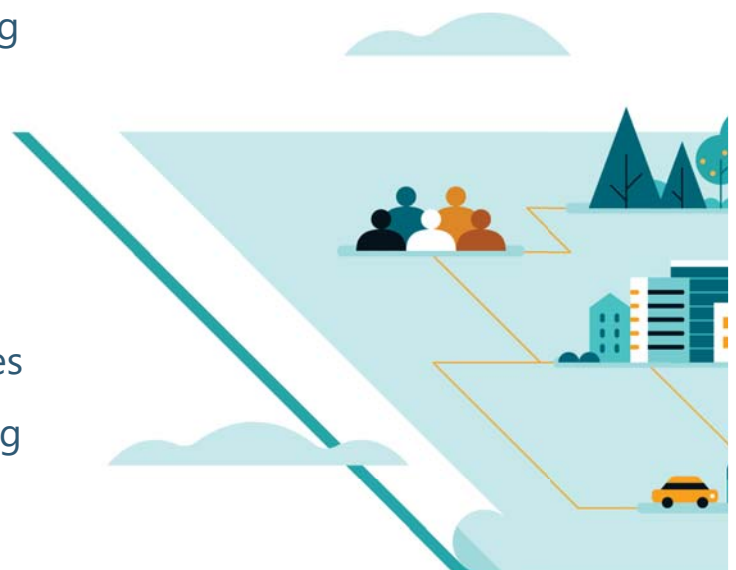# TOPICS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

Plan Process and Application

- Overall process improvements
- Application of Priority Equity Communities
- Application of Priority Development Areas

Topics for Future Discussion

- Comprehensive sustainable freight planning
- Addressing VMT increases from roadway capacity-increasing projects
- Aligning growth with regional resilience
- Supporting the clean energy transition
- Ensuring equity in the transition to user fees
- Identifying needs and strategies for housing infrastructure investments
- Reforming Senate Bill 375

PROGRAM ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (PEIR)

CEQA Requirements

- SCAG is the CEQA Lead Agency for Connect SoCal 2024 (CEQA Project)

- PEIR is the appropriate type of CEQA document for a regional plan

- PEIR includes a region-wide, first-tier, programmatic level assessment

- Evaluates and discloses potential environmental impacts of Plan

- Mitigates or avoids significant adverse environmental impacts of Plan

2024 PEIR Process

2022   **2023**   **2024**

Scoping Meetings #1 & #2

30-DAY SCOPING COMMENT PERIOD (OCT 17, 2022 – NOV 16, 2022)

TRIBAL CONSULTATION

PUBLIC & STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH

65-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT PERIOD
(NOV 9, 2023 – JAN 12, 2024)

Aviation Technical Advisory Committee

Global & Land Use Economic Counsel

Joint Policy Committees

Joint Sustainable and Resilient Communities/ Natural And Farm Lands Conservation

Regional Council   City of Riverside

South Coast Air Quality Management District

Technical Working Group

Ventura County Air Pollution Control District

Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority / Riverside County Transportation Commission

Three Components of the Proposed Final PEIR

COMPLETE DRAFT PEIR
(CHAPTERS 1-7)

RESPONSE TO COMMENTS
(CHAPTER 8)

CLARIFICATIONS AND REVISIONS
(CHAPTER 9)

Component No. 1: Complete Draft PEIR

- **Executive Summary**
- **Chapter 1.0 – Introduction**
- **Chapter 2.0 – Project Description**
- **Chapter 3.0 – Environmental Setting, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures**
- **Chapter 4.0 – Alternatives**
- **Chapter 5.0 – Other CEQA Considerations**
- **Chapter 6.0 – List of Preparers**
- **Chapter 7.0 - Glossary**
- **7 Technical Appendices supporting the 2024 Draft PEIR**

For a complete copy of the 2024 Draft PEIR, please visit SCAG's website at: www.scag.ca.gov/peir

COMPONENT NO. 2 OF THE FINAL PEIR

Chapter 8 - Response to Comments

Comments Received on the Draft PEIR

- 33 comment letters

- Totaling ~700 unique comments

- Overall summary:
  - Requests for clarification or text edits
  - Requests for additional data or analysis (particularly at a local level)
  - Suggestions for additional content, subject discussion or mitigation

CATEGORY OF COMMENTERS	NUMBER
Sovereign Nations	1
Federal Agencies	1
State Agencies	3
Regional Agencies	2
Subregional Agencies	1
County Transportation Commissions	2
Local Agencies (including SCAG Member Jurisdictions)	6
Organizations	16
Individuals	1
Total	**33***

*Note: Includes 31 timely submission of comment letters and two comment letter received after the close of the public review and comment period.

Master Responses for Recurring Themes

- No. 1 – Comments related to Draft Connect SoCal 2024

- No. 2 – General Comments and Non-CEQA Issues

- No. 3 – Level of Detail in a Program EIR versus Project EIR

- No. 4 – Regional Development Pattern and Growth Forecast

- No. 5 – Mitigation Measures

- No. 6 – Alternatives

COMPONENT NO. 3 OF THE FINAL PEIR

Chapter 9 - Clarifications and Revisions

Categories of Revisions

Category 1 – Revisions to the Plan Since Publication of the 2024 Draft PEIR
- Summarizes the latest project information for various Plan components such as Plan's Project List, jurisdictional level growth forecast, modeling and SPM results, and transportation finance.

Category 2 – Response to Comments on the 2024 Draft PEIR
- Revisions and clarifications from comments received on Draft PEIR.

Category 3 – Staff-Initiated Clarification and Revisions
- Staff-initiated revisions to correct typographical errors, including grammar, punctuation, misspellings, missing words, misnumbering, and other clerical errors.

Bottom line: With public comments and updates, the conclusions regarding the significance of the impacts in the Draft PEIR were not affected. All information and revisions merely clarify, amplify, or make insignificant modifications to the Draft PEIR. Recirculation is not required.

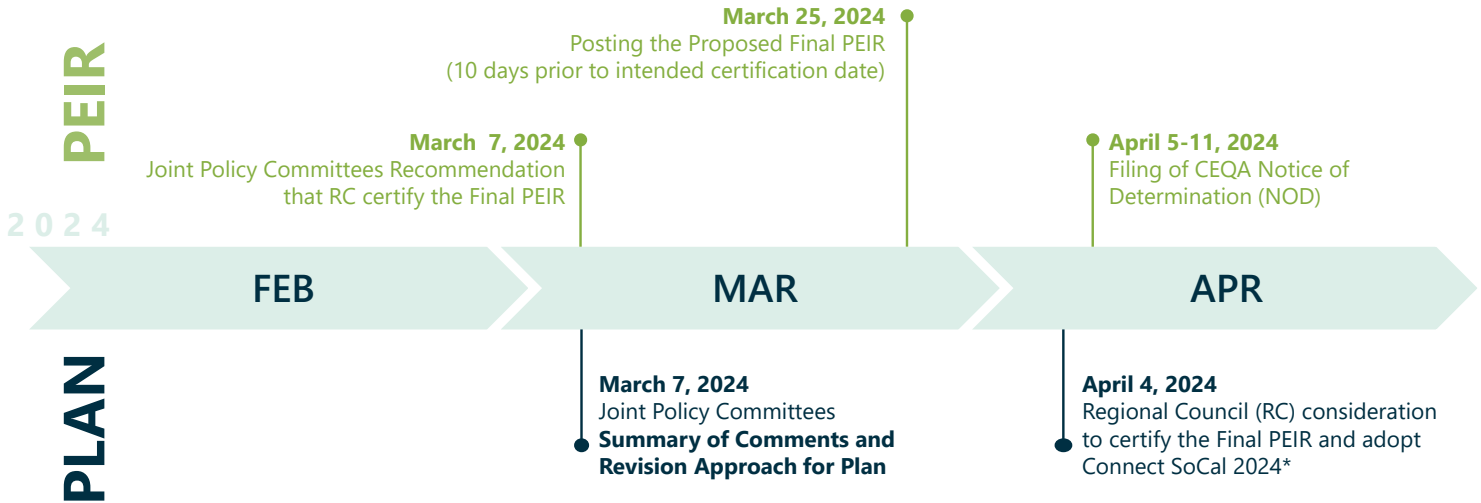# Additional CEQA-Required Information for the Proposed Final PEIR

A resolution and three exhibits will be presented to the Regional Council at its April 4, 2024 meeting:

1) Exhibit A - Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (CEQA Guidelines Section 15091(d) and 15097)

2) Exhibit B - Findings of Fact (CEQA Guidelines Section 15091)

3) Exhibit C - Statement of Overriding Considerations (CEQA Guidelines Section 15093)
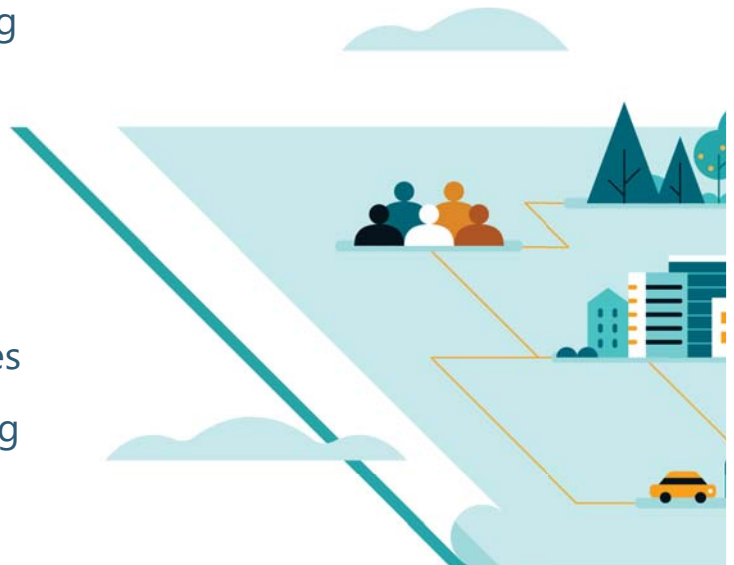
NEXT STEPS FOR PLAN AND PEIR

Next Steps

PEIR

2024

March 25, 2024
Posting the Proposed Final PEIR
(10 days prior to intended certification date)

March 7, 2024
Joint Policy Committees Recommendation
that RC certify the Final PEIR

April 5-11, 2024
Filing of CEQA Notice of
Determination (NOD)

FEB	MAR	APR

PLAN

March 7, 2024
Joint Policy Committees
**Summary of Comments and
Revision Approach for Plan**

April 4, 2024
Regional Council (RC) consideration
to certify the Final PEIR and adopt
Connect SoCal 2024*

*The Final PEIR must first be certified by the Regional Council prior to approving Connect SoCal 2024 (CEQA Guidelines Section 15090)

Topics for Future Discussion

- Comprehensive sustainable freight planning

- Addressing VMT increases from roadway
  capacity-increasing projects

- Aligning growth with regional resilience

- Supporting the clean energy transition

- Ensuring equity in the transition to user fees

- Identifying needs and strategies for housing
  infrastructure investments

- Reforming Senate Bill 375

Recommended Actions – March 7, 2024

Plan Action	PEIR Action
Recommend that the Regional Council approve the proposed final 2024 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, Connect SoCal 2024, the 2023 Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) Consistency Amendment #23-26, and the associated proposed final transportation conformity analysis.	Recommend that the Regional Council certify the Final Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) for Connect SoCal 2024 and direct staff to carry out administrative tasks for the Final PEIR certification.